

**Evaluation Sheet For National Register Eligibility  
Potential Historic District Form**

- 1) **Location:** Millville, Baltimore Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware  
Potential: Unknown (outside scope of work) outside of Area of Potential Effect (APE)  
Historic District: No
  
- 2) **Boundary:** See Map 1  
The Millville District boundary considered for this Potential Historic District Form is that portion of the Area of Potential Effect (APE), delineated for the Route 26 Improvements Project, in which all buildings and structures that border any proposed project activities along the existing Route 26 mainline were evaluated pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4(a)(1).  
  
The western boundary of the Millville District considered as a Potential Historic District is located approximately 425 feet west of Road 347 and Route 26 (this is the eastern portion of the village of Millville as depicted on Sussex County, Delaware Tax Assessment Map 1-34-12. **See Map 1**); the eastern boundary of the Millville District is located at the intersection of Route 26 and Road 349A (Central Avenue). All properties fifty (50) years in age or older that touch the existing Route 26 were examined. See the attached list for all of the Cultural Resource Survey (CRS) numbers considered as part of the Millville District.
  
- 3) **Eligibility Comments:** Millville, Delaware is recommended **not eligible** as a potential district.

**State Plan Link:**

Zone: Coastal (Bethany Beach, DE USGS Quadrangle, Photo revised 1984)

Period(s): Industrialization & Early Urbanization, 1830-1880 +/-; Urbanization & Early Suburbanization, 1880-1940 +/-

Theme(s): Settlement Patterns & Demographic Changes; Agriculture; Architecture, Engineering, and Decorative Arts

Property Type(s): Agricultural Complexes; I-houses (some with Vernacular Gothic Revival and Greek Revival detailing); Bungalows, Vernacular Gothic-Revival Church, Minimal Traditional and Colonial Revival dwellings; a Filling Station (see the *Route 26 Eligibility Study*)

**Development of Millville**

Little to date has been uncovered about the development of Millville as a community. Following an oral interview with Grace Wolf, lifetime resident of Millville, Delaware in May 2002, the name of Dukesville or Dukestown was considered for the hamlet during the late nineteenth – early twentieth century (Oral interview with Grace Wolf, May 2002). Millville was chosen as the name of the village instead because milling operations were once the staple of the community. Evidence of milling operations has not been uncovered to date along that portion of the Millville District following Route 26 (Bodo and Geurrant note in their *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Baltimore Mills Historic Archaeological Site (S-750), Route 382, Omar,*

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*Delaware* that in 1850 only two water-powered gristmills were operating in all of Baltimore Hundred – and by 1880, competition has forced both of these mills to close (Bodo & Geurrant, Section 8, page 6).

The Dukes, Townsends and Phillips families all show up in deed research for properties along Route 26 in the Millville District. Per Grace Wolf, her father, Harry Dukes, from Bayard, Delaware constructed a filling station at the northern junction of Route 26 and Route 17; he also moved and reconstructed the clinker brick dwelling located at the southwest corner of Route 26 and Route 17. The Millville Protestant Church was constructed c. 1897 (now “Reflections Antiques” S-9118); the Millville United Methodist Church was built c. 1907. The Townsend and Phillips families operated a general store along the south side of Route 26 during the twentieth century; evidence has been found of at least one other store operating in Millville which has since been demolished. Today, the former Millville Protestant Church has been converted into an antique shop, one of the general stores in Millville has been demolished, and the former Townsend (E. B. Phillips) Store (S-is vacant).

Like Clarksville and Ocean View, Millville witnessed a growth in seasonal traffic along Route 26 once roadways were paved and improved (**See Figure 2**). Sussex County’s beaches became popular tourist destinations following World War II. In order to accommodate an influx of visitors, tourist amenities such as super markets (Food Lion) and antique shops were built or converted out of older housing during the late twentieth century. Older housing was torn down in favor of new development, and some larger farms were parceled out to make way for beach housing subdivisions. Additions were frequently made to older houses to accommodate modern amenities; fire and new development took its toll on Millville during the second half of the twentieth century.

**Physical Integrity:** The Millville District considered along Route 26 generally suffers from a lack of integrity of setting, feeling, association, and materials. Many of the structures seen on historic maps and historic USGS Quads no longer exist (**See Figures One and Three**), and those that do remain have sustained modern alterations and unsympathetic additions. While S-9120 (The Townsend/Phillips Store and dwelling) functioned as a general store post office for the village of Millville in the early twentieth century, this property is no longer being used as a commercial property (it is now vacant). The proliferation of general stores and residences that once characterized Millville along Route 26, east of the intersection of Route 26 and Dukes Drive, are no longer seen today. Many modern Millville properties are not being used in an agricultural capacity – the historic acreage of many farms has been subdivided to accommodate the commercial development seen along the Route 26/Atlantic Avenue corridor associated with the beach tourism industry. In the place of these former general stores properties are the Millville Volunteer Fire Department, Atlantic Boat Center, and the Food Lion Supermarket.

In addition, the high volume of traffic that currently passes through Millville along Route 26 has destroyed the rural, linear feeling, setting and association that the village once exhibited, and open agricultural fields have been supplanted by modern development (except in the case of the Pearl G. Robinson Property, S-9121; **See Figure Two**). New development that has occurred along the outskirts of the community (as seen along northern shoulder of Route 26 near the intersection of Route 26 and Old Mill Road) has also compromised the integrity of Millville. Little to no integrity of Millville remains due to the demolition, alteration, and traffic pattern changes that have occurred

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within the corridor over the past several decades, altering the integrity of the historic fabric of Millville.

Due to physical alterations, which include, but are not limited to, porch infill, changes in fenestration, unsympathetic additions, demolition, and unsympathetic changes to the setting, the Millville District lacks integrity of feeling, design, materials and workmanship. Since the historic fabric of the hamlet is frequently lacking, and community structures and organizations once located in the Millville District are not gone (such as the post office, general store and town hall), the Millville District also lacks significance as a historic district.

**Eligible for Listing:** YES ☐ NO ☒

**Explain:** Millville is not directly associated with an event of importance, nor is it a representative example of a linear village that illustrates a pattern of events or historic trends (Criterion A). Millville is not known to be associated with the productive lives of persons important to local, state, or national history (Criterion B). The buildings located within the village of Millville are not distinctive to a given period in time or method of construction (except, for example, those resources which are being recommended individually eligible, such as S-9119, The Grace D. Wolf Property; S-9117, The Millville Service Center; and S-9120, The Townsend/Phillips Store and dwelling), nor do they represent the work of a master or architect (Criterion C). Owing to prior ground disturbances along Route 26, there is little probability that new information will result from any archaeological testing performed in the vicinity of the village (Criterion D).

**Evaluator:** Jennifer Horner McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc. May 30, 2002/Revised July 2003  
Name Firm and Title Date

**Concur:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name SHPO and Title Date

**Comments:**

**List of CRS #'s considered for the Millville District for the Route 26 Planning Study**

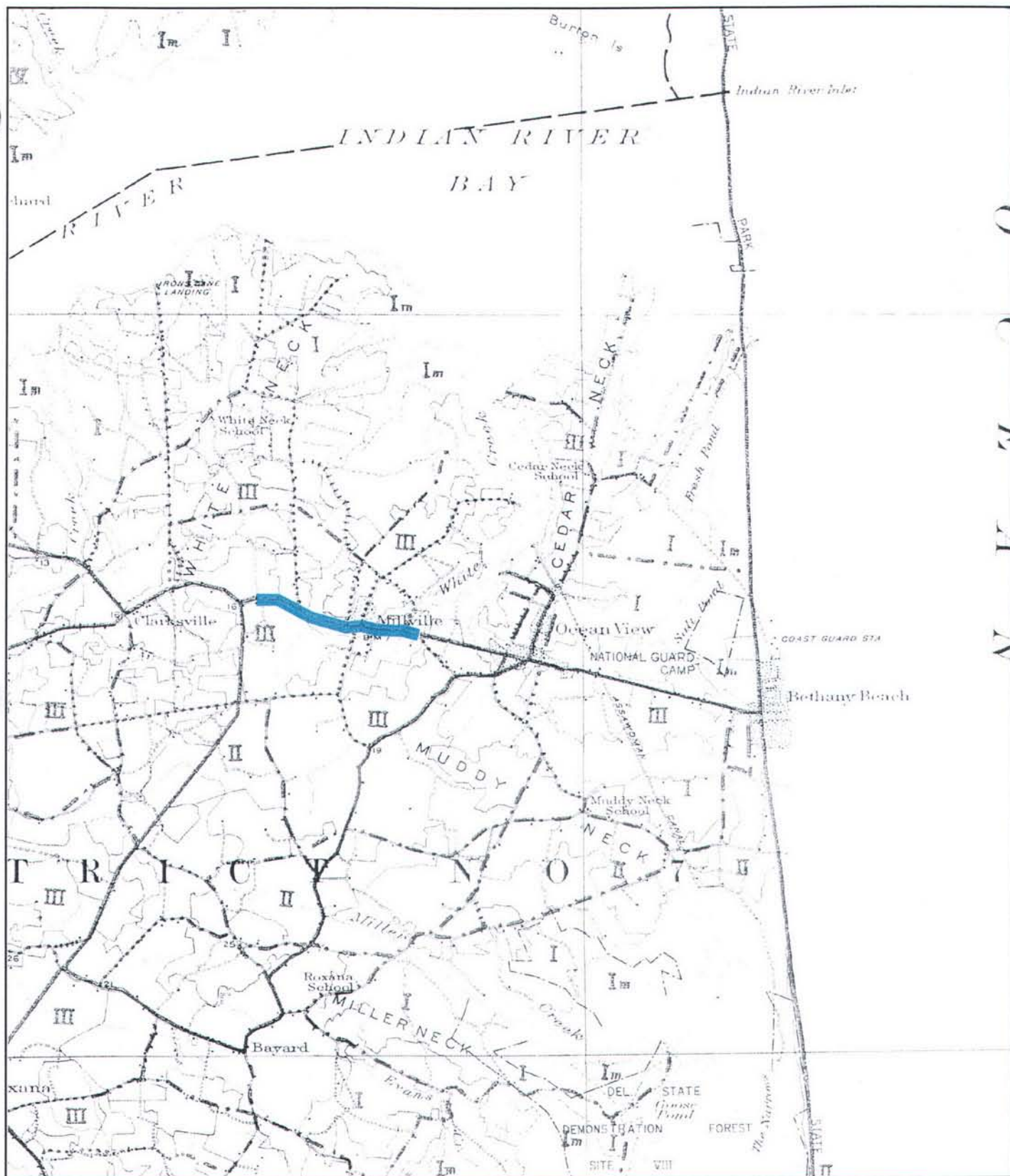
**Millville District**

S-2480  
S-2450  
S-9768  
S-9766  
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S-9764  
S-9763  
S-9758  
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S-9767  
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S-9120  
S-9121









 Vicinity of Millville District



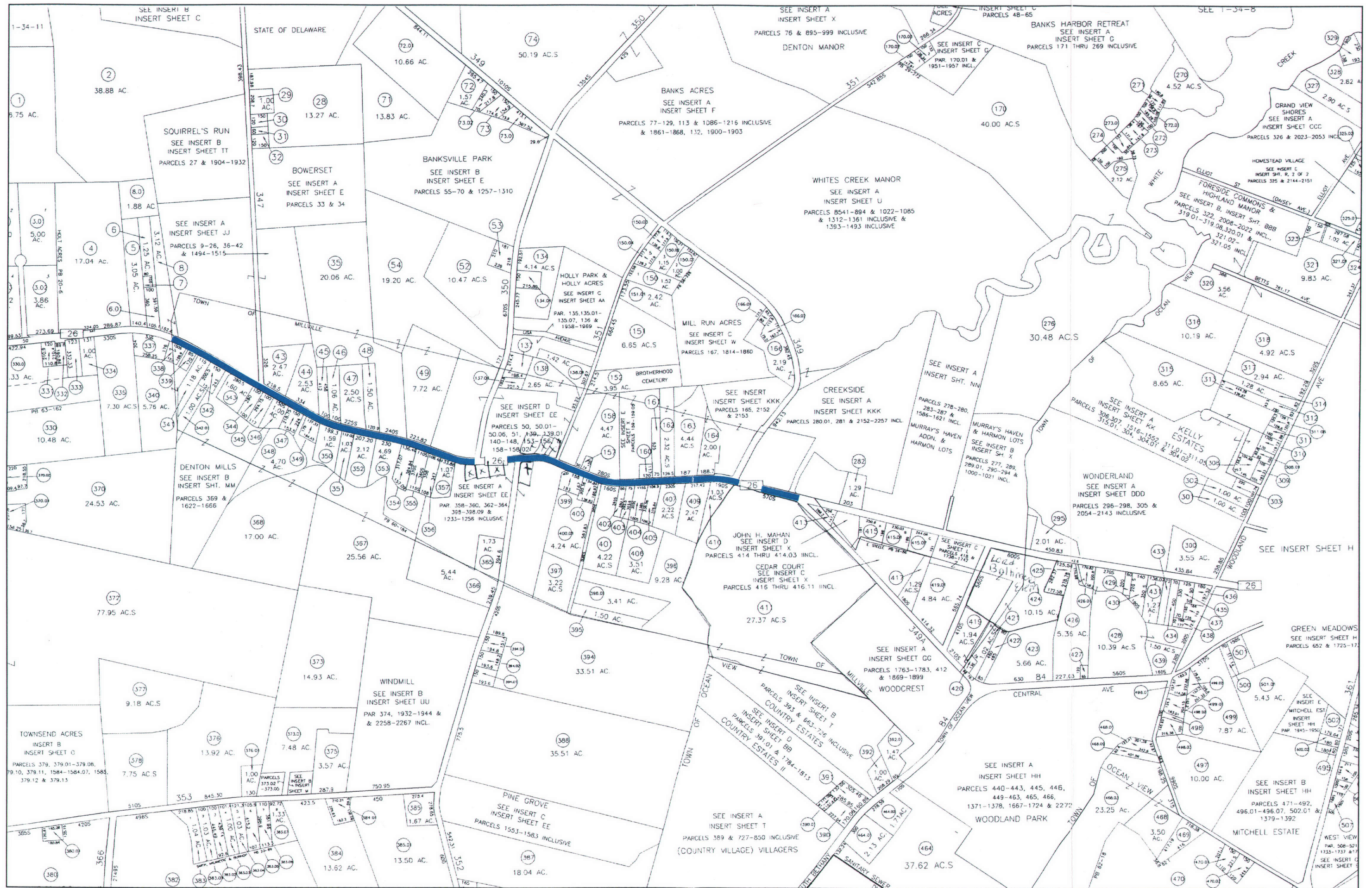
N

Not to Scale

Frankford, DE  
USGS Quadrangle  
Photo Revised 1941  
Delaware State Archives

Figure 3





Map: 1-34-12 Millville District





Photograph 1: Millville District, looking east down Route 26, west of the junction of Dukes Drive (July 2003). Many of the older residences and civic structures of Millville have been moved or demolished, destroying the feeling of Millville as a linear village.



Photograph 2: Millville District, looking east down Route 26, east of Dukes Drive. S-2482 is seen on the right edge of the photo (July 2003). Modern infill, seen left, has diminished the feeling, and setting of the Millville District.



Photograph 3: Millville District, looking west down Route 26, east of Dukes Drive. S-9119 is seen in the extreme left side of the photo; S-9118 is seen right-center (July 2003). Little sense of the community feeling exists today in the Millville District along Route 26.